Well, Christmas break was an enjoyable time for me. I got to see my sons and their girl friends, hear about new job prospects from my sons and their career dreams and visited my aging parents. I heard of some other Christmas vacation plans in the Department. Some have worked out well 😊 and others, not so well 😞.

Speaking of Christmas vacation plans, Tracy should return from her visit of Northern Italy (side trips to Rome and Paris) next week. [What is the emoticon for jealousy?] Suiko Roper and Karen Gregg have been tremendous in helping me get through this week and work students through the Banner system. Thanks to both of them.

Overall, enrollment numbers look good at this early point in the semester. We will have a better idea of actual enrollments in a couple of weeks.

We start the new year with a new faculty member (geography) in the Department, Joe Morgan. See below for a picture of Joe and to read about his research and interests. If you see Joe, please take a few seconds to introduce yourself.

Good luck to each of you. Keep up your enthusiasm, your passion, and your concern for the students.
-- Lou

THANK YOU!

Well, I put together two Christmas cards and divided the contributed money into the cards and gave them with greetings and thanks to the two housekeepers in Martin Hall and McGee Hall. They responded with lovely thank you note addressed to Physical and Earth Sciences: "Thank you for being so thoughtful. You are all so kind. We are glad to be at work at Martin and McGee. Thanks again and Happy New Year, Doris Sherer." Also, "Thank you all so very much for the money, all three of us are enjoying it. Thanks, Your Housekeepers, Dot Tibbetts and Sandra Ramine. [So, I messed up, there are three housekeepers, not two! Though they seem to have things sorted. - Lou]
Please Welcome the Newest Faculty Member in the Department—Dr. Joe Morgan

Joe Morgan did his graduate work at The University at Buffalo as an IGERT Scholar. He was with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro since 2002 and most recently at Texas A&M in College Station, Texas. As of January 2010, Dr. Morgan will be at Jacksonville State University in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences. Dr. Morgan’s research deals specifically with attitudes towards privacy in a spatial context. The primary focus is the impact that the growth and democratization of spatial technologies has on the perceptions of privacy in contemporary society. Dr. Morgan is also evaluating the commodification of spatial data as it relates to privacy concerns of technology consumers. Of particular interest is how the use of geospatial technological such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), global positioning systems (GPS), location based services (LBS), and other spatially aware technologies have led to a significant increase in the collection and use of personally identifiable spatial data. Dr. Morgan is also working with the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement and Sherubtse College to establish a GIS pilot project for Thimphu City, the capital city of Bhutan. He has been involved with the development of internships with the Bhutanese Government to create a trained workforce for GIS applications. It is hoped that a Student / Faculty exchange program with the Royal University of Bhutan can also be established.

Student Absences at the Start of Term
Dr. Wade asked me to convey to you Dr. Turner’s recommendation concerning absences as the term begins. As you may know, two dorms at JSU have heat and power problems, and the University has been struggling to house the students displaced by this, putting these students in other dorms or hotels, and also by calling and asking some of them not to come to campus until Monday. Given these housing problems, plus the uncertainties of the weather for the next few days and the potential disruptions, Dr. Turner has asked that we be lenient with absences at least until Monday. Dr. Wade thus encourages you to be flexible and understanding about absences. He expects that even if JSU does not cancel classes, we will likely have reduced attendance, particularly for late afternoon and evening classes. Thanks for your help. -- Lisa Williams

Arts and Sciences Student Symposium
The Arts and Sciences Student Symposium is scheduled for February 16 and 17. Again this year, we need faculty members to volunteer to judge the students’ presentations. If you can help with the judging, please contact Gena Christopher at genac@jsu.edu. It is best if you can give a morning (8-12) or an afternoon (1-4), but any help will be appreciated. -- Gena

University News

Campus Blood Drive on January 8
The American Red Cross bus will be parked at Circle Drive at the Merrill Building for the blood drive on Friday, January 8, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. All presenting volunteer donors will be automatically entered into a drawing for a $1,000 gift card!
Reminder: Travel grants due to Dean's Office by 25 January
There is only one call this year for University Travel and Self-Improvement Grants for faculty who will be presenting at regional and national professional meetings. We need the original grant applications in the Associate Dean’s office, 107 Martin Hall, by Monday, January 25. We will make the additional 9 copies of each grant and will deliver the completed packets to Dr. Delap’s office by the University deadline. Please note that the College deadline is earlier than the University deadline. The guidelines are:
1. Only those who are presenting are eligible for this funding.
2. Documentation of acceptance must be included. This can be a letter, email, or program page. The committee will not fund the application if there is no documentation. The Department Head should check for documentation prior to sending the application to the Dean.
3. Forms are available at http://www.jsu.edu/depart/avpasa/travelgrant.htm This page has all the information on the grants, plus a link to Word and Adobe documents into which the faculty can enter data. Please refresh your browser and use the new form.

24/7/365 Blackboard Support Now Available
The Office of Distance Education is pleased to announce that JSU has established a 24/7/365 Blackboard support environment, which includes the following technical support options for all students and faculty:

- 24/7/365 Phone Support: Blackboard users may call 877.216.7064 to receive technical support for Blackboard Learn version 9 and supporting software such as Respondus LockDown Browser and SafeAssign.
- Blackboard users may visit the support portal at http://jsubbsupport.com.

Current Weather Updates
"Is it going to snow?" and "Will classes be cancelled?" Please be assured that we are monitoring the weather and will alert the campus community immediately should conditions deteriorate or a decision be made to cancel classes. Please help us keep our students and coworkers abreast of the latest developments by visiting the weather link on www.jsu.edu often. Updates will also be broadcast via our Twitter feed: www.twitter.com/JSUNews. The University strongly encourages all employees and students to sign up for JSU’s Emergency Alert to have messages sent to your phone. Directions for registration are on our Emergency Center page: http://www.jsunews.com/emergency-center/

Faculty Exchange for Wuhan University
Reminder the deadline is 15 January.

Student News

Airborne Research Program
The National Suborbital Education and Research Center at the University of North Dakota organizes the program for NASA. The program gives a total research experience to the students starting with lectures from university research faculty and NASA staff on all aspects of airborne research, hands on experience with airborne instrumentation, flight experience on a research data flight, sample and data analysis, and preparation and presentation of their research results. The 6 week program will be run from two...
locations in California, the University of California at Irvine campus and the NASA Dryden Aircraft Operations Facility in Palmdale, CA. The SARP 2010 flier can be accessed at http://www.nserc.und.edu/. Deadline for application is 22 February.

Degenerate States

Stand Up Comedy

• Two fat bubba's are in a bar, one says to the other, 'Your round.' The other one says, 'So are you.' [Is fat bubba redundant? -- Ed.]
• And the back of his parka was leaping up and down, and people were chucking money to him. I said, 'Do you earn a living doing that?' He said, 'Yes, this is my livelihood.'
• So I was getting into my car and this stranger says to me, 'Can you give me a lift?' I said, 'Sure, you look great, the world’s your oyster, go for it.'
• You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windshield, it said, 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice.
• So I went to the dentist. He said, 'Say Aaah.' I said ‘why?’ He said, 'My dog’s died'
• So I got home, and the phone was ringing. I picked it up, and said, 'Who’s speaking please?' And a voice said, 'You are.'
• So I telephoned my local library. I said, 'Is that the local library?' She said, 'It depends where you’re calling from.'
• So I rang up a local building firm. I said, 'I want a skip outside my house. He said I’m not stopping you.' [Ask Jonathan if you did not get that one. – Ed.]
• Apparently, 1 in 5 people in the world are Chinese. And there are 5 people in my family, so it must be one of them. It’s either my mom or my dad. Or my older brother Mike. Or my younger brother Ho Cha Chu. But I think it’s Mike.
• So I was in my car, and I was driving along and my boss called my cell phone and he said, ‘You’ve been promoted.’ And I swerved. And then he called me a second time and said, 'You've been promoted again.' And I swerved again. He called a third time and said, 'You're managing director' And I went into a tree. And a policeman came up and said, 'What happened to you?' And I said, 'I careered off the road.'

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.